

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MELBOU 00691 180616Z

17

ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /042 W

----- 060085

R 180530Z JUN 74

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2205

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

UNCLAS MELBOURNE 0691

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, AS

SUBJECT: TRAVEL PLANS OF ROBERT HAWKE, ACTU PRESIDENT

1. HAWKE TELEPHONED LABATT AT PORT MORESBY BEFORE MAKING PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT IN MELBOURNE THAT HE WAS NOT LEAVING AUSTRALIA BECAUSE OF POST OFFICE CRISIS.

2. HAWKE TOLD LABATT THAT HE HAD ENTERED DISPUTE JUNE 17 AT OFFICIAL REQUEST OF UNIONS INVOLVED BUT HAD MADE LITTLE PROGRESS SO FAR AT MEETINGS WITH POSTMASTER GENERAL BISHOP AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES. HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT HIS CHANCES TO END SERIES OF STOPPAGES AND OVERTIME BANS BY POSTAL AND COMMUNICATION WORKERS IN NEAR FUTURE. HAWKE SAID COUNTRY FACED SERIOUS SITUATION AND HE CANNOT APPEAR TO BE "WALKING OUT". HAWKE SAID ALSO THAT THERE IS TROUBLE BREWING AMONG DEFENSE PLANT WORKERS WHO ARE VERY UPSET BY IMPLICATION OF GOA ECONOMIC POLICY WHICH "SACRIFICES THEIR WAGES TO FIGHT INFLATION". HAWKE THINKS THIS IS POTENTIALLY MORE DANGEROUS TO UNION MOVEMENT THAN POSTAL TROUBLES.

4. MESSAGE OF REGRET AND APOLOGY GOING TODAY TO JOSEPH BEIRNE AND HIS UNION CONVENTION WHICH HAWKE WILL NOW HAVE TO MISS.

5. HOWEVER, HE WOULD LIKE ONLY TO DEFER WASHINGTON SCHEDULE AS HE PLANS TO TRANSIT U.S. ON WAY BACK FROM DUKE OF EDINBURGH
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CONFERENCE AT END OF JULY. HE ASKS THAT WE NOTIFY GEORGE MEANY

OF HIS NEW PLAN. LABATT ASSUMES THIS DELAY IS ACCEPTABLE AND
WILL REPORT HAWKE'S NEW TRAVEL SCHEDULE AFTER RETURNING TO
MELBOURNE JUNE 28.
BROWN

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